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so long in possession of it; the most prominent point, Cap Camard, covering the island of Hyères.

On the Italian side, the view is as limited as it is extended towards France. The mountain which rises above Monaco eclipses the less elevated regions beyond it. In the pass between the top of this mountain and the jagged crests beyond, are found the remains of the gigantic monument erected by Augustus to commemorate his victory over the people of these countries; and from thence you descend upon Italy. And now where are you? Are you still in France, or are you already in Italy? It is easy to reply, with a geographical treatise in hand, which indicates as a frontier line the bed of the rivulet, lost in the sands, called the river Var. But comparing a chart of the Republic with one of the Empire, we see that the Var is one of those undetermined frontiers which change with every treaty, and not one of those immutable boundaries such as the Rhine or the Alps. To turn to history, where did Gaul commence under the Romans? The Itinerary of Antonius leaves no doubt on the subject. Between Cemenelo (now Cimies) and Lumone (now Menton) the geographer mentions, by the name of *Alpes summa*, an intermediate station, which, reckoning according to the distances, coincides with the village of Turbie; and on the mention of this station he adds: "Usque huc Italia, hinc Gallia" ("Up to this point is Italy, beyond it is Gaul").

The acts of St. Pons, the first apostle of Nice, leave no doubt that in the first ages of Christianity this decision was always respected. "Passing beyond the frontiers of Italy he reached a town, situated far from the crest of the Alps, named Cimella." This is the same village, Turbie, which formed the separation between Provence and Liguria in the middle ages; as it appears, in a treaty of 1125, between the Count of Toulouse and the Count of Barcelona: "Ipse mons per fines Italiæ descendit ad ipsam Turbiam in mare" ("The mountain forming the frontiers of Italy descends at Turbie to the sea"). It may be added, that the monument erected by Augustus on this spot forms a strong proof that Turbie was a boundary point between Italy and Gaul. Pompey had raised one of the kind upon the crest of the Pyrenees on the limits of Spain and Gaul. Augustus, who, after having imitated this great general in his war against an independent people, wished to imitate him in his glory, would be likely to erect his trophy on the limits of Gaul and Italy.

To conclude with a proof more appropriate to the traveller: in a kind of inn, near Esa, whither a French writer had been driven by the heat of the road, he heard nothing spoken around him but French and Provençal; and the hostess, whom he questioned, knew no more of Italian than is known at Quimper Corentin. "It is below, beyond the mountains," said she, "that they speak that language."

SCARRON'S "COMIC ROMANCE."

As one of the French writers who contributed, in some measure, to the formation of that clear and lively style of composition which Pascal, Voltaire, and Lesage carried to such a high degree of perfection, Paul Scarron deserves honourable mention. He was born at Paris in the year 1610, and was intended for the church—indeed a canonry at Mans was actually obtained for him; but having been stricken with the palsy, and thus deprived of the use of his limbs, at the age of twenty-six, he was compelled to forego all prospects of clerical distinction. In spite, however, of this drawback, he managed, by his brilliant talents, to win for his father the favour of Cardinal Richelieu—who was the means of procuring him a handsome pension from the crown, though he had previously been offended with him—and to obtain for himself the hand of the witty and beautiful Mademoiselle d'Aubigné, whose splendid accomplishments, combined with his own, attracted around them all the *élite* of that period, and whom he left a widow in the year 1660. She afterwards became more remarkable under the name of Madame de Maintenon.

Of all Scarron's works, the "Comic Romance" is certainly the most distinguished. Even Boileau, who said to Racine the younger, "Your father sometimes was weak enough to read Scarron's verses, but he took care to conceal it from me"—even Boileau himself saw some merit in this work. And, indeed, there are in it, notwithstanding its frequent traits of burlesque, many proofs of observation, well-drawn portraits, and a certain lively and natural eloquence rarely found in the prose writers who preceded Scarron. Besides its other merits, it is noticeable as the first serious attempt at a portraiture of manners in fiction. Previous writers of romance had confined themselves to great adventures, fabulous passions, and feats of gallantry. Every one is familiar with those strange recitals in ten or twenty volumes, in which the greatest men of antiquity were transformed into courtiers and gentlemen of the time of the magnificent Louis Quatorze. The "Comic Romance" of Scarron tended to counteract this ridiculous species of literature, much in the same way as Cervantes' "Don Quixote" had the books of chivalry. Thus, in spite of the vast difference between the Spanish and the French writers, Scarron has the honour of having contributed in his measure to render the cause of good sense and truth predominant.

It must not, however, be supposed that the work of Scarron is completely free from all tinge of romance. A Spanish influence is perceptible in the sentimental details with which

the author has interspersed his narrative, as Lesage himself did afterwards in his "Gil Blas." These false ornaments, stuck rather awkwardly in the comic story, are evidently a concession to the vitiated taste of the time. Obligated to intermingle recitals of lofty gallantry with his public-house adventures, the author has some trouble to preserve a serious tone, and sometimes heedlessly abandons himself to satirical sallies.

Stripping the "Comic Romance" of useless episodes, we find that it consists mainly of the adventures of a set of country players, roaming about from place to place to obtain a precarious subsistence. Our engraving (p. 52) represents the arrival of a part of the company in the town of Mans. To give the reader a better insight into its meaning, we will here quote from Scarron the passage which our artist has rather freely rendered.

"The sun had accomplished more than half his journey, and his chariot, having reached the descent in the heavens, was rolling along more quickly than he liked. Had his horses chosen to take advantage of the downward tendency of the road, they would have completed what remained of the day in less than half a quarter of an hour; but instead of pulling with all their force, they amused themselves by curvetting and snuffing up the briny air, which made them neigh, and warned them of their approach to the ocean, in which their master is said to rest every night. Humanly and more intelligibly speaking, it was between five and six in the afternoon, when a cart entered the market-place of Mans. This vehicle was drawn by two very lean oxen, headed by a mare, whose foal kept running round the cart like a silly creature as it was. The cart was full of boxes, trunks, large packages, and painted coverings, which formed a complete pyramid, on the top of which sat a young woman, dressed half in city and half in country fashion. A young man, as poor in clothes as he was plump in the face, was walking by the side of the cart. He had a great plaster on his face, which covered one eye and half the cheek; and carried on his shoulder a large gun, with which he had killed several magpies, jays, and ravens, that formed a sort of belt, from beneath which peeped out the feet of a fowl and a gosling, which looked very much as if they had fallen a prey to this kind of warfare. Instead of a hat, he had nothing but a nightcap, twisted round with garters of various colours, forming a sort of turban in the rough. He had on a gray doublet, with a strap, to which was fastened his long

sword. He wore a sort of knee-breeches, such as actors put on when they have to represent any great hero of antiquity, and instead of shoes he had buskins, after the ancient fashion, which were well worn and dirty. An old man, dressed rather more tidily, though far from well, was walking by his side. He carried a bass-viol on his shoulder, and as he stooped a little in walking, he appeared at a distance like a large tortoise going along on his hind legs. The company passed the principal public-house, at the door of which many of the chief inhabitants of the town were assembled. The novelty of the paraphernalia, and the noise of the rabble who crowded round the cart, had attracted the notice of the worthy burgomasters to these strangers. Among others, a provost, named La Rapinière (the Pilferer), went up to them, and with an air of magisterial authority demanded to know who they were. The young man, of whom I have just spoken, replied that they were Frenchmen by birth, and actors by profession; that his

drawn from life. The character of the old player, called Malice, deserves to be cited as an example of the happy manner of the romancist. "Malice was one of those misanthropists who hate every body, and do not love themselves—I have known many such, who were never seen to laugh. He had some little talent, and wrote satirical verses indifferently well. He was also destitute of every feeling of honour, malicious as an old ape, and envious as a cur. He had something to find fault with in every member of his profession. One was too affected, another too uncouth, another too cold, and so of the rest: and he would fain have one believe he was the only actor without fault; and yet the fact was, he would not have been allowed to continue in the company, but for his having grown old in the service. Latterly he had been reduced to perform the part of nurses and old women, in a mask. In his better days he represented a head-porter, confidant, messenger, or bailiff's follower, when a king was to be



ARRIVAL OF COMEDIANS AT MANS (SCARRON'S "COMIC ROMANCE").

theatrical name was Destiny, and that of his aged companion Malice, and that of the young woman perched on the top of the baggage, Cavern. The conversation was suddenly brought to a close by sundry blows of the fist and dreadful oaths which were heard in front of the cart. It was the waiter of the inn, who had belaboured the driver with blows without warning, because his oxen had made too free with a heap of hay in front of the door."

This troop, according to Scarron, formed only a part of the whole. Our author draws a lively picture of the characters of the remainder. He also describes, with much spirit, certain subordinate personages, such as La Rapinière, an officer of the police, as ready to commit crimes on his own account as to prosecute them in others.

The adventures of these various persons are not well connected together. We find nothing but mystification, quarrels at public-houses, and misfortunes in travelling; but the narrative is generally rapid and gay, and the portraits are

escorted, or any one was to be assassinated, or a battle was to be fought. He sang villainously in a trio, and afterwards powdered himself for a farce. On the strength of these brilliant accomplishments, he supported an intolerable amount of vanity, which was combined with incessant railery, an inexhaustible fund of slander, and a quarrelsome humour, backed, it must be confessed, by some valour. All this made his companions regard him with a sort of terror. Towards Destiny alone he was mild as a lamb, and appeared as reasonable as his nature would allow. It was said he had once been thrashed by him, but this rumour did not last long, any more than that of his liking for other people's property, which he was strongly suspected of having made too free with. Yet with all this, he was the best fellow in the world."

The "Comic Romance" also contains details indicative of the manners of the lower classes of society at that period. There are to be found in the conversations, certain thoughts on art, more striking than have been thrown out for many years..